

To: Mr Hayden
From: Wolston Parish Council
Date: 18 April 2018

Sir,

During your opening remarks to the public hearing into the draft Rugby Local Plan on Tuesday 17th April you drew attention to the need to demonstrate 'exceptional circumstances' when a Local Authority considered altering the boundary of a Green Belt, and you requested that the Council explain how they had demonstrated these 'exceptional circumstances' in respect of the site allocations on Green Belt land proposed for release at the Main Rural Settlements. As part of their response the Council advised that they fully supported development within the settlement boundaries of the Main Rural Settlements and that they also fully supported development of Affordable Housing.

We have to advise you that this is not the experience of Wolston Parish Council. We have two small sites within Wolston, both owned by the Council and both occupied wholly or partly by derelict garages. Individually both sites are too small to be considered within a SHLAA but together they are capable of delivering between 12 and 15 dwellings. A recent (May 2017) Housing Needs Survey indicated the need for 19 Affordable dwellings and 10 mainly small 'market' dwellings within Wolston. In an attempt to take these two small brownfield sites forward for development to meet a clear local need representatives of Wolston Parish Council met with officers of Rugby Borough Council on 29th January 2018 in order to discuss whether we could reach a mutually agreeable path that would allow these sites to be developed to meet the need identified by the HNS. The response from the Council was not in any way supportive and was broadly negative, the officers clearly indicating that they wished to retain the 'status quo' of the small income stream from the few remaining garages that were in a fit condition to be rented. Wolston

Parish Council was very surprised by this rebuff, as development of these sites would largely negate the need for the Linden Tree Bungalow site to be developed, and the availability of these brownfield sites for development also appears to override any 'exceptional circumstances' that may have been used by the Council to justify this proposed release of Green Belt land in Wolston.

Yours Faithfully

Maria Meede
Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
Wolston Parish Council